



THE **Sooner** WAY OF LIFE

# The Sooner WAY OF LIFE

The University of Oklahoma's beautiful, bustling campus is nestled in the heart of Norman, the state's third largest city. Norman combines the charm of a college town, the sophistication of a cosmopolitan city and the history and culture of the American West.

Faculty who come to OU for outstanding career opportunities are captivated by Norman and its easy way of living. They stay because Norman is a culturally diverse community where balancing work and achievement with family and recreation is, quite simply, our way of life – **the Sooner way of life.**

## NORMAN AT A GLANCE



**AFFORDABILITY + [COMMUNITY, DIVERSITY AND CULTURE] = HIGH QUALITY OF LIFE**

## OKLAHOMA AT A GLANCE



*Quick access from Oklahoma City's Will Rogers World Airport to Kansas City, Chicago, Dallas, Houston, New Orleans, Denver and many other cities*



# Community AND NEIGHBORHOODS

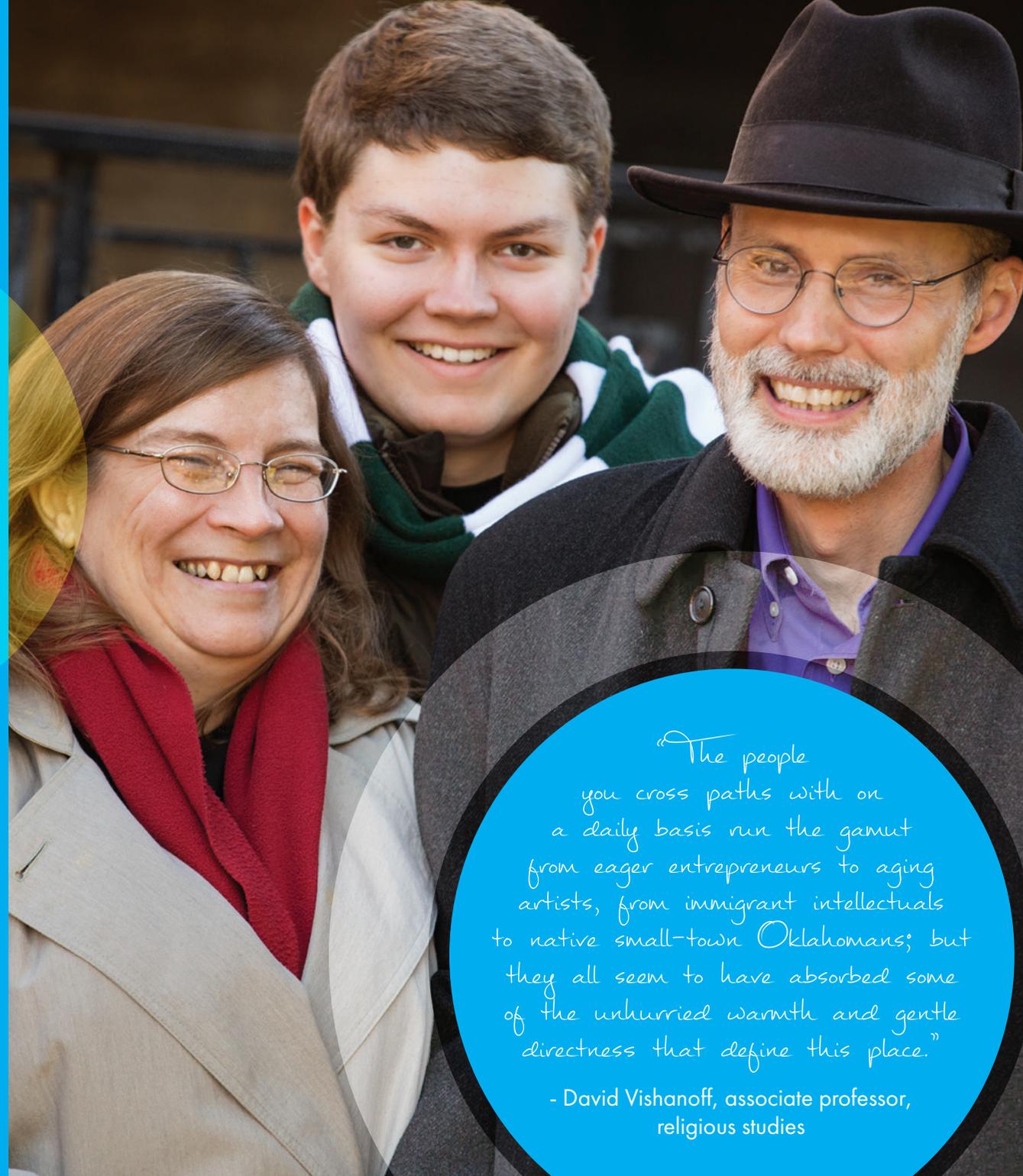
Norman's neighborhoods offer a wide variety of old and new – from campus homes to rural estates to modern designs. Neighborhood, community and local government organizations work together to address beautification, historic preservation and public safety issues.

With a cost of living close to 15 percent less than the national average, Norman is a very affordable city. **In fall 2014, *Time* ranked Norman the "least expensive city to raise children."**

Norman's two city-designated historic preservation districts flank the east and west sides of the university. Most of 300-plus homes were built between 1915 and 1938, represent almost every architectural style prevalent during the first quarter of the 20th century, and are significant for their collection of eclectic residential homes, including the popular Bungalow, a subtype of the Craftsman style.

## Green Norman

- *Curbside recycling*
- *Seasonal cleanup collection*
- *CNG-fueled public transportation*
- *Bicycle-friendly community*



*"The people you cross paths with on a daily basis run the gamut from eager entrepreneurs to aging artists, from immigrant intellectuals to native small-town Oklahomans; but they all seem to have absorbed some of the unhurried warmth and gentle directness that define this place."*

- David Vishanoff, associate professor, religious studies

# SUPERIOR Schools

The **Norman Public School District** is recognized on the state and national levels for exceptional teachers and instructional programs. In 2013, *U.S. News & World Report*, *Newsweek* and the *Washington Post* acknowledged **both Norman high schools as among the top 5 percent in the nation**. In 2014, *Newsweek*, the *Washington Post*, *U.S. News & World Report* and the *Daily Beast* commended the **district for its rigor and success**.

- 2 high schools, 4 middle schools, 17 elementary schools, 1 alternative school, and 1 online school
- 16,000 students
- Eighth largest Oklahoma school district
- Second in the state in:
  - National Merit Scholar semifinalists and finalists
  - U.S. Department of Education Blue Ribbon Schools
  - Oklahoma Reward Schools
  - National board-certified teachers

A \$109 million capital program completed in 2013 provided **enhancements and/or additions at each school**. Voters have approved another \$129 million in capital improvements to be completed during the 2017-18 school year that include the **creation of University Centers** on both high school campuses, and several districtwide enhancements, among which is a **1:1 technology initiative**.

**Norman also has five private schools.**

## ENRICHMENT PROGRAMS

Bart Conner Gymnastics Academy  
Child development centers  
City of Norman recreation centers,  
sports and camps  
Community After School Program  
Firehouse Arts Center

Norman Music Institute  
Norman Public Library  
Norman Youth Soccer Association  
OU Precollegiate Programs  
Sooner Studio  
YMCA

In the NPS **French language immersion program** at Reagan Elementary, students spend half their day learning math and science in French.



*"Norman is a truly pleasant place to raise and educate a family. The people are exceptionally warm."*

*- Bala Saho, assistant professor, history*



# Cultural CORNERSTONE

Known as the **City of Festivals**, Norman is home to more than 25 annual festivals, fairs and events, including:

- Norman Music Festival
- Jazz in June
- Medieval Fair
- Firehouse Art Center Chocolate Festival
- May Fair
- Norman Mardi Gras Parade
- Dia de los Muertos (Day of the Dead)
- 89ers Day Parade
- National Weather Festival

Each month, the Norman Arts Council presents **The 2nd Friday Norman Art Walk**, a citywide celebration of art. The popular collaboration among visual and performing artists, art organizations and businesses is a free public event.

Performances by the **Norman Ballet Company** and the **Norman Philharmonic** are other popular cultural events.

The **Sooner Theatre** in Norman's historic downtown arts district offers in-house musical

theatre productions, concerts by national touring groups, special events and dozens of performing arts classes for all ages at The Studio of The Sooner Theatre. **The Depot**, which continues to operate as Norman's train station, also is an art gallery and home base for the popular Winter Wind, Summer Breeze and jazz concert series.

And for **sports enthusiasts**, Norman has countless opportunities — from the thrill of OU athletic events to the fun of a round of golf to the camaraderie of community leagues for all ages, this city has it all.

## OU Arts District *9 venues | 350 annual performances*

- ▷ ballet and modern dance
- ▷ art exhibitions
- ▷ dramas
- ▷ concerts
- ▷ musical theater
- ▷ opera
- ▷ recitals



# Inspiring INTERACTION

Norman's concert and performance venues are located throughout the city and range from arenas, music halls and theaters to coffee houses, parks and city streets.

A collaboration among the Norman Arts Council, Norman Public Arts Board and Firehouse Art Center promotes community-based public art that fosters social interaction, develops arts awareness and enhances Norman's public spaces. The Samo Ducky Project, inspired by the Cow Parade in Chicago and other similar public art initiatives, integrates unique art into community parks. The "duck parade" currently consists of 15 installations with such whimsical names as

Swimmin' Sammy Steel, Ziggy Star Duck, Glow in the Duck, and Dig Duck, all painted by local artists.

Central Norman's culture of biking for transportation make it a natural fit for **artist-designed bike racks**. With shapes ranging from bison to thunderclouds to, yes, bicycles in various forms, the colorful and practical racks created as part of another public arts project inspire conversation and interaction in the community.

Norman's public arts projects also include sculptures that visually anchor the downtown arts district and murals painted on building facades that illustrate the history and culture of the state.

Norman's public arts projects are supported in part by donations to the Art in Public Places Fund through city utility bills.

## OU ONE-OF-A-KIND COLLECTIONS

Bizzell Bible Collection  
Fleischaker, Thams and Adkins collections  
of Taos and Native American art  
History of Science Collections

Native American Languages Collection  
Vertebrate Paleontology Collection  
Weitzenhoffer Collection of Impressionism  
Western History Collections

## OU world-class museums

*The Fred Jones Jr. Museum of Art and the Sam Noble  
Oklahoma Museum of Natural History*



*"Norman is a great college town — big enough to have things to do, but small enough to feel like you belong to a community. People are extremely friendly and neighbors really care about each other."*

*- Sharon Kessler, assistant professor, microbiology and plant biology*



# DAY Trippin'

Want to take a day trip? **Oklahoma City** is just 17 miles away.

In historic **Bricktown**, take a horse-drawn carriage ride, hop on a water taxi for a cruise down the canal, catch an **Oklahoma City Dodgers** baseball game at the Chickasaw Bricktown Ballpark or drop in at the American Banjo Museum. Just a few blocks away, cheer on the **Oklahoma City Thunder** at Chesapeake Energy Arena or the **Oklahoma City Barons** hockey team at the Cox Convention Center. At the **Oklahoma City Boathouse District** – home of the Oklahoma Regatta Festival and training area for Olympic hopefuls and the OU rowing team – anyone can get on the water to row, kayak, dragon boat or stand-up paddle board. For an airborne experience, zip line across the river or try the rumble drop or sky slide.

Downtown, the **Oklahoma City National Memorial and Museum** honors “those who were killed, those who survived and those changed forever” by the 1995 **Murrah**

**Building** bombing. The **Myriad Botanical Gardens** and conservatory displays plants from around the world.

Other Oklahoma City attractions include the Paseo Arts District, Oklahoma City Zoo, **National Cowboy and Western Heritage Museum**, Oklahoma History Center, Frontier City Theme Park and National Softball Hall of Fame.

Seventy-five minutes south of Norman, a visit to **Arbuckle Country** could include the Chickasaw National Recreation Area, Turner Falls, the Arbuckle Mountains, Lake Murray State Park and Lake Texoma.

Take the **Heartland Flyer** Amtrak passenger train from Norman to Fort Worth in the morning and return the same evening. Or stay for a day or two and enjoy the Dallas-Fort Worth metro.





# Pubs AND DANCE

From continental cuisine to comfort food, Asian fusion to Mexican favorites, pasta to vegan, Norman offers outstanding dining experiences for every palate.

A vibrant night life unfolds throughout the city. Start in the OU Arts District and Campus Corner, move a few blocks north to downtown Main Street and head west toward Brookhaven Village for live music and theater, museums and galleries, and community festivals and other events.

## SAVORY SAMPLINGS

Benvenuti's  
Bison Witches  
Blu Fine Wine & Food  
Cafe Plaid  
Charleston's  
Classic 50's Drive-in  
Cool Greens  
Fancy That  
Full Moon Sushi Bar & Bistro  
Greek House

Hideaway  
Jax Soul Kitchen  
Legend's  
Local  
Louie's Grill & Bar  
Michelangelo's  
O Asian Fusion  
O'Connells  
Pepe Delgados  
Pub W

Scratch  
Sooner Dairy  
Tarahumara Mexican Cafe  
Thai Thai  
The Diner  
The Library  
The Mont  
The Service Station  
Van's Pig Stand  
Victoria's - The Pasta Shop

**The Diner**, a downtown institution, was featured on *The Food Network's* Diners, Drive-Ins and Dives.



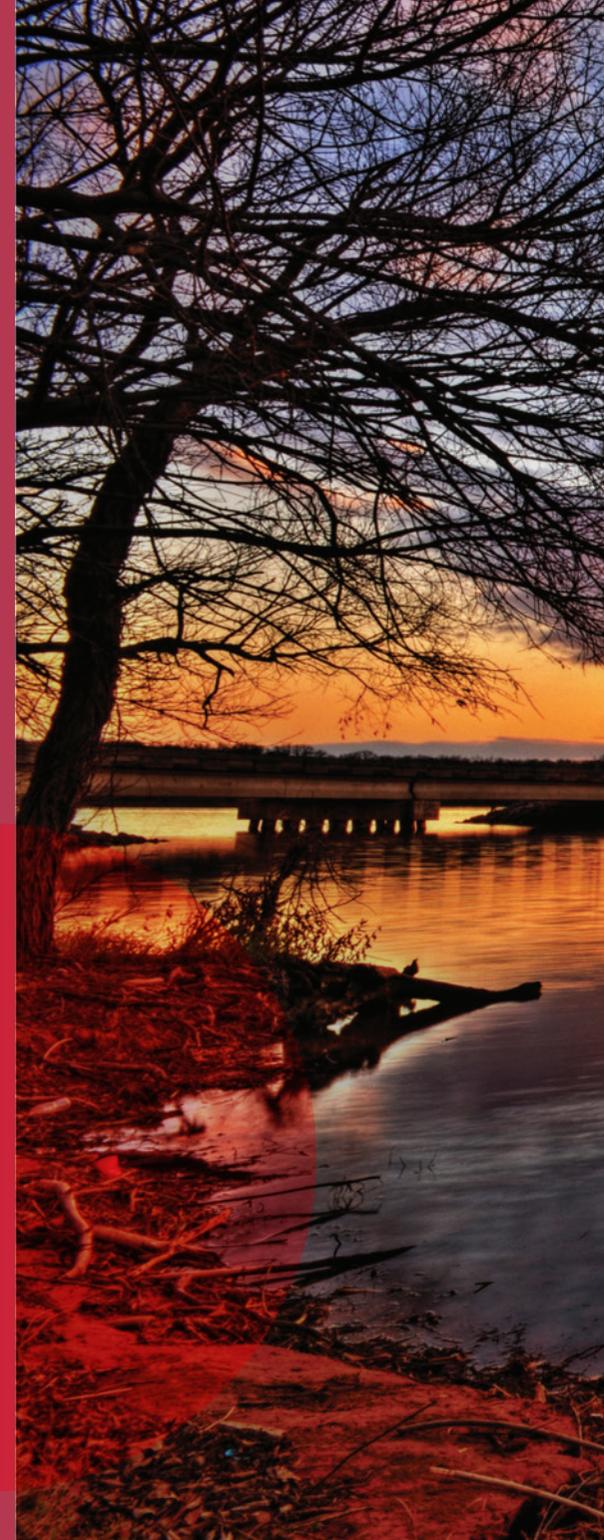
# Lakes TO LINKS

Norman has recreation options for everyone:

- Biking
- Billiards
- Bowling
- Disc golf
- Fishing
- Golf and miniature golf
- Hiking and camping
- Horseback riding
- Motorsports
- Paintball and laser tag
- Skating
- Swimming
- Tennis
- Water sports

For indoor fitness buffs, Norman's **gyms and health clubs** offer weight lifting and personal training; land and water group fitness classes; lap and leisure swimming; racquetball, handball, squash and basketball; climbing walls; and indoor running tracks.

*Oklahoma has 2,000 more miles of **shoreline** than the Atlantic and Gulf coasts combined.*





# Park IT

Norman's 55 public parks cover 810 acres and include a championship golf course, municipal swimming pool complex with a water slide, hiking trails, disc golf courses, fishing, tennis courts, playgrounds, splash pads, a skate park, a dog park, open and covered picnic areas, and indoor recreation centers. Recreation programs include sports leagues and clinics and dance

and exercise classes. The Griffin Park Sports Complex encompasses 16 soccer fields, 12 baseball fields and four football fields with support facilities.

Youth sporting programs include baseball, softball, basketball, soccer, football, golf and tennis are open to all ages.

*Crossing Norman from north to south, **Legacy Trail** is adorned with beautiful bronze sculptures, including one of Norman native son James Garner.*



# TO MARKET, TO Market

**Historic Campus Corner**, a multi-block hub located directly north of OU, offers 75 retail, dining and entertainment establishments that include specialty boutiques (Antique Garden, Shoetopia, Savvy and Blush) and a full range of dining options from Thai, Mexican, Italian and Indian to burgers, barbeque, cupcakes and coffee.

From some of the most fertile soil in the country, Oklahoma farmers grow a bounty of fruits, vegetables, herbs, trees, plants and flowers. They also make some of the best jellies, jams, honeys and sauces available anywhere. All of it and more can be found at the **Norman Farm Market**, held twice weekly beginning with the first harvest in April to the last in October.

With its prairie-style architecture and landmarks, **Downtown Norman** offers an array of antique malls, jewelry stores, art galleries, furniture stores, gift shops and many dining options. A day downtown can start with a latte and antiques and end with a relaxing dinner and live music.

The family-friendly atmosphere of **Sooner Mall** draws shoppers to such big-name retailers as Dillard's, J.C. Penney, Old Navy, Sears, Gap and Forever 21, as well as shops featuring athletic gear, candy, greeting cards, fabric, and home and garden decor. Other retail options on the city's west side are **Brookhaven Village**, which boasts boutiques, day spas and a health club, specialty stores and eating establishments; **University North Park**, a two-mile shopping district that includes Target, Kohl's, Home Goods, T. J. Maxx, Academy Sports & Outdoors, and a Crest grocery store; and **Parkway Plaza** and **Redbud Plaza**, which offer Pier One, Toys R Us, Barnes & Noble, PetSmart and PetCo.

One-of-a-kind local shops are the norm at **Carriage Plaza**, an open-air center with carriage-style architecture and plenty of parking. Find high-end clothing and gifts at Cayman's and The Webb, gourmet candy at The Candy Basket and an impressive array of fine cheeses and specialty foods at Forward Foods.

## Norman's health and specialty food shops include

*Dodson's Health Food & Vitamins | Durango Mexican Store and Taqueria  
The Earth | Midway Market | Natural Grocers | Spice and Rice | Sprouts*



# Body

Norman offers a full array of health care facilities and services. Among them are:

**Norman Regional Health System** is composed of three hospitals, as well as outpatient diagnostic centers, medical transport services, physician services and centers of excellence.

The **J.D. McCarty Center for Children with Developmental Disabilities** is Oklahoma's center of excellence in the care and treatment of children with developmental disabilities.

**Griffin Memorial Hospital** is an adult inpatient psychiatric teaching hospital that offers comprehensive mental health services.



**Goddard Health Services** on OU's Norman campus is staffed by professionals dedicated to serving the health needs of the university community.

World-class health facilities in **Oklahoma City** include:

Harold Hamm Diabetes Center  
Integris Health System  
Mercy Hospital Oklahoma City  
Oklahoma Heart Hospital  
OU Medical Center  
OU Children's Hospital  
St. Anthony Hospital  
Stephenson Cancer Center

# AND Soul

**Norman is a welcoming, inclusive community in which these denominations and others are represented:**

Assembly of God  
Baha'i  
Baptist

Catholic  
Christian  
Christian Disciples  
Christian Science  
Church of Christ  
Church of God  
Church of Latter-Day Saints

Church of the Nazarene  
Episcopalian/Anglican  
Interdenominational  
Islam  
Jehovah's Witness  
Jewish  
Lutheran  
Messianic  
Methodist  
Nondenominational  
Orthodox Christian

Pentecostal  
Presbyterian  
Quaker  
Seventh Day Adventist  
Unitarian  
United Church of Christ  
Wesleyan